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ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF TRUTH IN ART.

ON the evening of the twenty-seventh of January, in the present year, a number of persons met at 32 Waverly Place, in the city of New York. Believing in the overwhelming power of the Truth, especially in Art, they had for some time seen the necessity of a united effort to revive true Art in America, and had assembled at this time to take counsel together, and if thought proper to organize an Association for the better promotion of the end just stated.

A meeting was organized and the usual formality of electing a temporary chairman and secretary gone through with. The objects and ends of such a society were informally discussed and the views of those present were freely expressed. The result was that a Committee was appointed to prepare a form of organization, containing a statement of principles embracing the ideas that had been expressed and generally approved by the assembled company, and to report at the next meeting.

Several meetings were subsequently held, at which the whole subject was discussed, and at length, on the eighteenth of February, the Articles of organization were reported complete, unanimously adopted, and signed by all the persons present. The Association thus became permanently organized and proceeded to elect officers.

The Articles covered the whole ground—Firstly, defining the principles upon which are based all right Art. Secondly, stating what they propose to do to carry out those principles, and, Thirdly, the form of organization, and discipline.

We cannot do justice to the first of the Articles without giving it entire. It says:

"We hold that the primary object of Art is to observe and record truth, whether of the visible universe or of emotion. All great Art results from an earnest love of the beauty and perfectness of God's creation, and is the attempt to tell the truth about it. The greatest Art includes the widest range, recording, with equal fidelity, the aspirations of the human soul, and the humblest facts of physical Nature.

"That the imagination can do its work, and free invention is possible

only when the knowledge of external Nature is extended and accurate. This knowledge, moreover, with sympathy and reverence, will make happy and useful artists of those to whom imagination and inventive power are denied.

"That beauty, in the vain pursuit of which generations of Artists have wasted their lives, can only be appreciated and seized by those who are trained to observe and record all truths, with equal exactness. True Art, representing Nature as she is, discovers all her beauty, and records it all. The art which seeks beauty alone, disobeying Nature's law of contrast and narrowing the Artist's mind, loses beauty and truth together.

"Therefore, that the right course for young Artists is faithful and loving representations of Nature, "selecting nothing and rejecting nothing," seeking only to express the greatest possible amount of fact. It is moreover, their duty to strive for the greatest attainable power of drawing, in view of the vast amount of good talent, of wit, knowledge and pleasant fancy, which is lost and wasted around us every day from mere want of ability to give it due expression.

"We hold that in all times of great Art, there has been a close connection between Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting; that Sculpture and Painting, having been first called into being for the decoration of buildings, have found their highest perfection when habitually associated with Architecture; that Architecture derives its greatest glory from such association; therefore, that this union of the Arts is necessary for the full development of each.

"We hold that it is necessary, in times when true Art is little practised or understood, to look back to other periods for instruction and inspiration. That, in seeking for a system of Architecture suitable for such study, we shall find it only in that of the middle Ages, of which the most perfect development is known as Gothic Architecture. This Architecture demands absolutely true and constructive building; alone, of all the styles that have prevailed on earth, it calls for complete

and faithful study of Nature for its decoration. It affords the widest possible field for every decorative Art, for Sculpture of natural forms, for Painting of every noble kind, for the rendering of noble forms and colors in glass-painting, mosaic, metal-working, pottery and furniture; and it is based upon a system of building more nearly than any other that which we at present need. The exact reproduction of mediæval work is only desirable so far as it may be necessary to regain the lost knowledge of the vital principles that controlled it. Out of the careful study and application of these principles, a true and perfect Architecture is sure to arise, adapted to all our wants, and affording the most ample field possible for the display of our artistic power.

"We hold that the revival of Art in our own time, of which the principal manifestations have been in England, is full of promise for the future and consolation for the present. That the Pre-Raphaelite school is founded on principles of eternal truth. That the efforts for the restoration of the so-called Gothic Art, have been, in the main, well directed. That the hope for true Art in the future is in the complete and permanent success of this great reformation."

The second Article, after stating that the objects in forming the Association are to secure encouragement and mutual instruction, to assist meritorious artists who may need help, to develop latent artistic ability, especially among the class of mechanics, and to educate the public to a better understanding of the representative Arts, goes on to say that, to secure these objects they propose, as they have means, and opportunity shall serve:

First, to hold meetings at which papers shall be read on matters connected with Art, and at which members may exhibit their works and indulge in such free discussion and criticism as shall tend to their mutual advantage. Also for the discussion, formal or informal, of Art subjects,

and for remarks by the members concerning matters of observation, experience, reading or thought, which they may think noteworthy.

They propose, secondly to buy works of Art which they may approve, and to give commissions to deserving and faithful students for truthful studies from Nature. Also to assist pecuniarily young men of promise who may show a desire to study Art rightly.

Thirdly, to offer prizes for open competition in the arts of Drawing and Painting, Sculpture and Architecture; and in the various branches of ornamental manufacture and design.

Fourthly, to conduct or assist public exhibitions of naturalistic Art.

Fifthly, to conduct public lectures, whether by members of the Association, or by persons invited for the purpose, and

Sixthly, to conduct a journal or magazine for general circulation, containing critical notices and essays, with any matter that may tend to advance the cause, and affording the Association a convenient medium for such appeals to the public as it may be expedient to make.

The remainder of the Articles relate mainly to the details of the organization which are of little or no interest to the public. Among other things they maintain that in order to keep up a high standard of excellence in the work of its members, the Association assumes authority to criticise such works, and the members agree to assent to such criticism.

Since the meeting at which the Articles were adopted was held, the Association has met regularly, and has already entered into the performance of those duties to which they stand pledged.

This, the first number of *THE NEW PATH* will tell its own story. It will be sustained by individual effort as long as power remains to do so, but should the public assist it by generous patronage it may yet be able to accomplish even more than its projectors ever imagined.

THE NEW PATH will be issued monthly. The Subscription price will be one dollar a year. Subscriptions will be received by any of the members or by the editor. Single copies are ten cents, and can be had of members or at the rooms of the Association, 32 Waverly Place, New York.

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